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ABSTRACT

A study of minority graduate student needs at Peabody College of Vanderbilt University (Tennessee) found three areas needing improvement: (1) recruiting efforts; (2) social support; and (3) cultural environment. A mentoring program was then designed to address these needs by providing a personal and academic support network for minority students, creating an environment supportive of diversity, and enhancing faculty-student communication. Minority students are recruited before entry at the college. Faculty members are serving as mentors during the program's first year, but in the future experienced mentees will also be encouraged to become peer mentors. Mentors are not limited to those who are members of a minority group, both to expand relationships and increase interactions across campus and because the minority faculty population is small. When possible, formal mentor training sessions are provided; when this is not possible, informal training occurs, with participation of "model" mentors and mentees. Matching of students and mentors is based on shared research interests when possible. Mentor activities include a fall orientation, monthly social events, and a year-end celebration. An interim evaluation of the first year found very positive responses. Program participation increased during the year. Some participant comments are included here. (Contains 14 references.) (MSE)

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One Solution to Minority Graduate Students' Discontent at Peabody College

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Peabody College of Vanderbilt University

Roundtable to be presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, April, 1996.

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Introduction

Some of our nation's campuses have received national press attention about attitudes of non-concern and unfriendliness toward their minority students. This has prompted several studies of minority students' experiences at predominantly white institutions (Caldwell, 1995; Hurtado, Milem, Allen, & Clayton-Pedersen 1995; Nettles, 1988). Results have indicated that African-American students on many of these campuses experience isolation, alienation, and a lack of support (Allen, 1987). Such environmental problems may compound any academic difficulties that minority students may be experiencing and in so doing make the "comfort factor" doubly difficult for minority students (Green, 1989). Allen (1992) found that African-American students' college success was influenced by the campus context and students' interpersonal relationships. The most important components of the social context were an extensive network of friends, numerous social outlets, and supportive relationships. The most important aspects of the psychosocial context were multiple boosts to self-confidence and self-esteem, feelings of psychological comfort and belonging, and a sense of empowerment. If these variables are in place, it is probable that more students will succeed, as exemplified by African-American students in attendance at Black colleges who possess positive self-images, strong racial pride, and high aspirations (Allen, 1985). Effective means of generating these interpersonal and psychosocial supports for African-Americans on predominantly white campuses are critical if African-American students are to be successful on these campuses. Similarly, understanding the factors that undermine these students' academic achievement also appears critical to supporting African-American students' successes on these campuses.

The impetus for addressing these challenges stemmed from my attempts to organize and form an informal network in which I and other minority students could share personal experiences and discuss possible solutions to issues facing minority students in graduate education programs at their predominantly white university. To substantiate the need for the institution to support a formalized network for minority students, I was involved in an in-depth study a) documenting the conflicts and pressures facing graduate students of color on predominantly white campuses and b) identifying potential solutions to these problems. We have given particular attention to issues involving college recruitment, social support, and the campus environment

A direct result of the study was the establishment of a mentoring program for minority graduate students. The rationale for developing a program was that mentoring could address all three issues cited in the study. In addition, research indicated that mentoring was a key factor to black graduate students' successes (Blackwell, 1989). In this paper, I will address conceptualization of the program, the implementation process, the affect on participants, and the revisions incorporated in the program. Although the program is still in the developmental stage, a discussion of the process and pitfalls may be of help to others who wish to develop a similar program on their campus.

Background

Personal Experience

Many of the difficulties of African-American students on predominantly white campuses have been part of my experiences at Peabody College. Although I had expected many of these difficulties due to my previous experiences at other predominantly white campuses, I did not anticipate the degree to which I would experience them on this campus. On my previous

campuses, social organizations existed for students of color, opportunities to develop interpersonal relationships with persons of a similar background were made available by the institution, personnel at the university recognized the issues unique to minority students, and they supported and sponsored events to help resolve them. Peabody College had none of these. Rather than wait for this idea to manifest itself with a faculty member or administrator, I made the decision to be proactive and bring these issues to the attention of a Peabody administrator. We discussed the fact that many white faculty members and administrators did not see the campus environment as minority students did, and that sensitivity to the issues facing minorities on campus needed to be addressed.

Our first effort to attempt to increase the "comfort factor" on campus was planned by minority graduate students and sponsored by the same Peabody administrator in the Spring, 1994. It was an informal gathering for African-American graduate and professional students and African-American faculty. The purpose of this event was to give students an opportunity to network with faculty members and graduate students in other departments. Feedback from participants was positive; they expressed the need and importance for more events like these in the future.

A second such event was sponsored in the Fall, 1994; however, this gathering included a broader audience: a select number of Peabody faculty and administrators of all races and all minority graduate students. The purpose of this event was similar to the first, but it had the added purpose of highlighting findings from an internal study about the needs and issues of minority graduate students. Many who were in attendance expressed the need and the importance for all faculty and administrators to be made aware of these facts. In addition, many expressed the fact that the once a semester

gatherings should only be the start of the solutions of minority graduate students' issues at Peabody College.

The study

During the Summer, 1994, between the two events, this same Peabody administrator asked me and another doctoral student to research the issues related to minority student recruitment, retention, and support in Peabody's graduate programs. To gather information about the issues and potential solutions, we interviewed selected faculty members, administrators, and minority graduate students, spoke with persons at other universities with notable programs in the area, and examined several library sources and program descriptions. At the conclusion of this study, we identified three areas in which Peabody needed significant improvement: recruiting efforts, social support, and the cultural environment. Findings of the current recruitment, social support, and environmental situations for minority graduate students and recommendations for improvements are detailed below.

Recruitment

Current situation. We found that most Peabody departments relied solely on general recruitment efforts--such as posters with return postcards, brochures sent to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and the College's reputation -- to get the attention of prospective students of color. As far as we could discern, there are no systematic efforts, in the College or in individual departments, to identify and actively recruit qualified minority applicants for graduate programs.

This low-key approach to minority graduate student recruitment is the same tactic used with the general population of prospective students. Routinely, prospective applicants initiate contact with the College, after

which the College Admissions and Financial Assistance Office sends a general information packet (the Graduate School and some departments send information specifically about Graduate School programs). The Director of Admissions and Financial Aid for the College is available to answer inquiries in person or by phone if a prospective applicant seeks more information. In the general information packet, prospective students seeking information about campus diversity find only a brief statement, in the Peabody Catalogue, about the University's Bishop Johnson Black Cultural Center. Although a few faculty members in some programs make personal, one-on-one calls in efforts to recruit particular students of color (a decision that appears to be based usually on relatively high GRE scores), most departments assume that prospective students will take the initiative (i.e., spending their time, money, and effort) and contact the department if they wish more specific information. This minimalist approach to recruitment, especially as it pertains to prospective students of color, is reflected in the low numbers of minority students enrolled at Peabody.

Recommended improvements. In order to increase minority representation on the Peabody campus, we recommended that recruitment efforts be greatly strengthened. Efforts made by rival schools (e.g. Purdue University) and other schools at Vanderbilt (e.g., Medicine, Sociology) to more aggressively seek and attract prospective student from varied ethnic groups have met with some success and constitute models that might well be put into place at Peabody.

For example, Purdue University has established long-term relationships with counselors at eleven HBCUs. These counselors recommend top minority students for attendance at a university sponsored, all-expense paid weekend at Purdue. In addition, top sophomore and junior students from

these HBCUs have the opportunity to do research with selected Purdue University professors during the summer.

Closer to home, the recruiting tactics used by Vanderbilt's Medical School to attract minority students include sending all applicants a videotape about Vanderbilt, waiving the application fee, and scheduling a one-on-one meeting with the Associate Dean for Students and Student Affairs. In addition, the Medical School sends faculty members to career fairs, allocates money for student attendance to relevant national meetings, and has developed a recruitment brochure specifically designed to answer questions of particular interest to minority students.

Also within the University, the Sociology Department employs different recruiting strategies for minority applicants. All applicants receive personal phone calls and follow-up inquiries from faculty and graduate students, and they receive tailored recruitment letters. Faculty members give prospective applicants suggestions about how to present themselves well in the application essay and encourage them to include supporting research material so that departmental reviewers may obtain a full picture of a student's interests. Visits to campus are encouraged; during the student's visit to campus, faculty and students are committed to being open about the cultural environment at the University. Also during the visits, meeting with other in the University such as the Director of the Bishop Johnson Black Cultural Center, are arranged for the students. From time to time, additional recruiting efforts are employed, e.g., using the GRE minority locator service, recruiting and funding part-time students, advertising in publications that are targeted to minority students (e.g. Black Collegian) or those likely to be read by minority faculty members (e.g. Black Issues in Higher Education).

Social support

Current situation. Research indicates that many students of color have feelings of social estrangement and sociocultural alienation when attending predominantly white universities. We found that minority students at Vanderbilt and at Peabody are no different. In programs where there are few if any other students of color, students experience these feeling to an even greater degree. Since no formal social support systems are currently in place, students must develop their own social support base to survive these experiences. Some develop a support system with others of similar cultural backgrounds outside their program of study or outside of Vanderbilt. While personally helpful, such external support systems may not be able to offer the help specifically related to the student's academic and professional goals. Faculty members and students alike have indicated that having a stronger social support base on campus is critical to the success of efforts to diversify the student body. It appears that Peabody, with the exception of a few faculty members, has failed to recognize the need for a strong social support system for minority students. This lack of initiative in making an attempt to become aware of social needs gives the College the image of being insensitive to its students of color. In fact, informal accounts suggest that this issue has played a role in the non-enrollment and non-matriculation of some minority applicants and students.

Recommended improvements. The graduate students we interviewed believe that good mentorship is critical to their success at Peabody. Therefore, developing and instituting a formal mentor program seems an important first step in improving the current social support system. The mentorship program should include faculty members, current and new students, and administrators. Mentors could be assigned to current and new students. Regular meetings between mentors and students should be held to discuss

anything of importance as it relates to the graduate student. Students must feel that their mentors are receptive, available, and communicative. Academic support and life experiences can be provided by faculty, staff, and administrators, while current students can help with the socialization process and environmental adjustments. Rewarding those who participate in the program may serve to encourage participation because it has been given explicit value.

Monetary assistance for the support of specific activities--such as a College-wide student of color orientation and formal and informal gatherings for minority students, faculty, administrators, and staff--was suggested frequently. An orientation for entering students would help them develop a social base and perhaps provide the beginning of informal support groups. Minority faculty, whose numbers need to be significantly increased, can provide encouragement by acting as role models and can provide advice about what it takes to achieve and matriculate at Peabody. Panel discussions on topics such as the dissertation process, job searches, etc., should be conducted. In addition, minority faculty from other universities, especially HBCUs, should be invited to present and speak about their research. This would allow students and faculty an avenue of networking outside the College and provide another means of obtaining valuable information about academic and professional issues. Peabody could also sponsor or co-sponsor an annual institute similar to that of the Florida Endowment Fund and the Compact for Faculty Diversity, in which minority students present and share research and personal experiences. This would be an avenue for students of color to develop collaborative relationships with peers outside of Vanderbilt.

Environment

Current situation. We found that all faculty members, administrators, and graduate students with whom we spoke that Vanderbilt University, as a whole, has an understandably poor but correctable image among minority students. Vanderbilt's reputation is one of unfriendliness, insensitivity, and arrogance. This reputation has turned off many former and would-be Peabody faculty and students. A lack of University and College attention to changing this image is an indication of the value placed on ideas and opinions of minorities. For example, if Peabody values minority faculty members, why have they been excluded? (For example, the College has never tenured an African-American professor). In talking with faculty members, it appeared as if the College has taken the attitude used in recruiting minority students and applied it to recruiting minority faculty. Some of our interviewees asked important questions; e.g., the goal of research is to increase the sum of knowledge, should we not encourage faculty members to develop relationships with the black intellectual community in Nashville, specifically Fisk University and Tennessee State University? If Peabody prides itself on being one of the nation's top schools for future educators, should we not offer (or require) courses that focus specifically on helping students to teach well in multicultural environments? In the words of one administrator, "Before Peabody can begin to expect to attract the cream of the crop, diversity must become a part of the school's fiber."

Recommended improvements. We recommended that the College needs to be willing to embrace and take a more aggressive approach to its commitment to diversity. Diversity sensitivity and awareness workshops should be developed in order to give all faculty, administrators, and staff, the increased ability to recognize and be sensitive to particular issues as they relate to students of color. Also, all students should be strongly encouraged to

deal with the issue of diversity. A good starting point for all members of the campus community would be to view and discuss the Diversity Opportunity Tool video developed by Alma Clayton-Pedersen, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Academic Affairs. In addition, offering and requiring multicultural education classes to students may make the Peabody degree more valuable thereby making College graduates more marketable.

Increasing the number of minority faculty whose areas of research vary and complement those of other Peabody faculty members, and encouraging collaboration with minority faculty from either non-research or historically black institutions, are also likely to make the College more reputable by broadening its appeal. Many faculty members expressed frustration at the loss of top minority students and minority faculty candidates to rival schools. Most of these losses seemed to be due to the lack of an aggressive recruiting effort, or the absence of adequate social support, or a culturally sensitive environment. Although these reasons were frequently identified by interviewees, only a few on campus appear to have worked hard to change this status quo; others seem to have continued along the same path, resigning themselves to the way things are and always will be.

Conclusion to the study

Peabody's commitment to diversity must show in its recruiting efforts, social support, and cultural environment as it pertains to students and faculty of color. If we continue to allow and reward the attitude of complacency, the College will continue to reap what it sows--a standoffish reputation, a homogeneous faculty, staff, administration, and student body, and a lukewarm environment. Models of successful change exist. In order for Peabody to be considered a top school of choice for graduate and professional graduate students, it must become proactive in its efforts and commitment to

change. If the College recognizes no issues, ignores any problems, and discusses no change, there will be no growth.

Program development following the study

Mentoring was selected as the first program effort because studies indicated that a major reason for minority students' academic successes at institutions of higher education were their positive relationships with faculty members (Blackwell, 1983; Smith & Davidson, 1992; Van Stone, Nelson, & Niemann, 1994). Also, mentoring has been found to be an effective approach towards reducing isolation and recruiting, retaining and graduating students; this mentoring program can impact all three of these issues identified in the study (Hoover-Dempsey, Robinson, & Jones, 1994). Finally, our interviews with minority graduate students suggested that they had less access to faculty than their white counterparts, had little to no informal and supportive networks with faculty member, and had difficulties establishing relationships with faculty. Wunsch (1994) found that only a fortunate few engage in the mentoring process, even fewer are minorities. Based on the results of the study, a formal gathering was planned around the theme of improving the comfort of minority graduate students on campus through mentoring. The gathering was conducted as a brainstorming session with the explicit purpose of obtaining feedback about interest in and importance of a mentoring program, as well as the qualities of a mentor and the needs of a mentee. Responses from faculty and students suggested a formal mentoring program for minority graduate students was very of important to them. To maintain this momentum among faculty members and graduate students of color, I conducted research on the topic and became knowledgeable about the essential components and resources needed to operate a mentoring program.

In addition to overseeing the program activities in 1995-96, I drafted a proposal to support the basic elements of a strong mentoring program.

During the summer of 1995, the administration made the decision to support the first-ever orientation for graduate students of color. I was invited to participate in the planning of this event and to present the new opportunity of a mentoring program to currently and newly enrolled students. The presentation included the reasons for the program's development, the problems the program would attempt to address, and the expected outcomes for those who participated. During my talk, I made a plea to students to take advantage of the program, as thirty-two faculty and administrators had submitted interest forms to be a mentor but only five students had expressed an interest in being mentored. It appeared as if the need was not apparent to many students, especially new students, at that time. Perhaps because of their lack of experience with the campus environment, students were taking a wait and see attitude. The mentoring program is outlined below.

Minority Mentoring Program Proposal

Goals of the mentoring program

- To create a campus climate that encourages and values diversity.
- To develop a caring and personalized support network for minority students.
- To increase communication and interaction levels between faculty members and minority graduate students.
- To provide the encouragement and guidance often necessary to complete the degree program.

Anticipated outcomes of the mentoring program

- To increase the availability of a supportive, friendly environment for minority students.
- To increase the attractiveness of Peabody College to prospective minority students, thereby increasing the enrollment of minority students in all graduate and professional programs (over present levels).
- To increase the number of minority students who complete their degree programs. [The highest attrition rate of minority doctoral students is at the dissertation level (Deitz, 1993).]

Guidelines of the mentoring program

Participant recruitment

Each summer, all minority graduate students, both new and "old," and all faculty and administrators will be sent a letter explaining the goals and the format of the mentoring program and inviting them to participate. "Old" students, those who have spent more than a year in graduate school, may participate either as a peer mentor and/or a mentee. A return postcard will be included for those wishing to volunteer for the program. Persons interested in participating as members will be asked to attend a training session before the start of the fall semester. A publication of a mentorship brochure will be developed by Fall, 1997. This will be sent in place of the letter and return postcard.

Mentors and mentees in the previous year's program will be offered the opportunity to continue their participation. Mentees may change their status (from mentee to peer mentor) and both mentors and mentees may change persons with whom they were matched if they wish. A letter will be sent to faculty members and minority graduate students who are not already part of

the mentoring program asking them if they wish to participate as mentors and/or mentees.

Mentors will not be confined to membership in a minority group, as expanding relationships and increasing interactions across the campus community is important. Typically, minority faculty members bear the brunt of mentoring minority graduate students; for example, a study by Smith and Davidson (1992) suggested that black faculty and staff provided 40% of the help to minority students but made up only 4% of the university's total faculty and staff. Given the small number of minority faculty on this campus, white faculty and administrators must also assume the mentoring role for minority graduate students. "Mentoring minority students is not and should never be the sole responsibility of minority faculty members. It must be shared by all" (Blackwell, 1989, p. 12).

Training session

If time and money allow, a professional mentoring trainer will make presentations to mentor and mentees about understanding minority students' situations and the purposes and importance of mentoring relationships. If budget or time constraints do not allow for a formal training session, a panel of "model" mentors and mentees will gather within their prospective groups separately to outline what they will do to fulfill their obligations as a mentor or mentee. Participants in either type of "training" session will discuss the following:

- Roles and responsibilities in the mentor-mentee relationship
- The expectations for participation (time commitment, productive behavior, etc.)
- Realistic expectations of the "other" person in the relationship (what help the mentee needs and what help the mentor can provide)

- Cross-cultural sensitivity and communication (for example, discussions surrounding the DOT vignettes)

Matching mentors and mentees

Mentorship interest forms will be sent to minority graduate students and faculty members. These forms elicit such information as:

- Academic background
- Personal interests
- Research concerns
- Perceived personal benefits of a mentoring program

To promote compatibility between participants, an attempt will be made to match mentees and mentors based upon shared research interests.

Major activities

At the beginning of the fall semester, a special gathering will be sponsored during orientation week to formally introduce mentees and mentors. Information about the year's activities will be provided. (As a general orientation tactic, a "face book" of all faculty members, administrators, and "old" and new graduate students will be provided.) This activity will aid entering students in developing a social base among students and faculty members.

Once a month, an informal social activity will be planned, at least two across the year will be sponsored by the Associate Dean's office. The purpose of these events is for mentors and mentees to share information about their Peabody and mentor-mentee experiences and to provide support to one another.

An end-of-the-year celebration in appreciation to program participants' efforts will also be sponsored. During this time, mentors and mentees will

have an opportunity to talk publicly about their experiences. Certificates will be given in recognition of participation in the mentoring program.

Evaluation Plan

Obtaining feedback from participants is critical for program development and change. During the first year of the program, an interim evaluation was conducted (December, 1995) in which students were asked about the :

- Nature of the interactions (personal or professional)
- Value of the mentoring experience
- Amount of contact with mentor or mentee
- Benefits of planned activities
- Suggestions for change
- Particular activities of interest

Interviews are being conducted with participants throughout the spring semester and will be used to supplement the written evaluations. The following questions are being asked in the interviews:

- What were your motivations for participating in the program?
- What were your expectations/needs from the program?
- Were these expectations/needs met?
- What have you accomplished in your mentor-mentee relationship?

After the first year of the program, an evaluation will be conducted every other year at the end of the spring semester. The evaluation may incorporate many of these same questions. Informal feedback from mentors and mentees about the program's effectiveness will be collected and assessed continually.

Results of the interim evaluation

Throughout the 1995-96 academic year, more and more students began to take advantage of the program. This may have been due to the "spreading of the word" and the sharing of experiences by faculty and students alike. The

increase may have also been due to students discovering and experiencing environmental issues for themselves; half of the mentees expressed a need for a mentor some months after the beginning of the program, either late in the fall semester or early in the spring semester. To date, there are twenty-four mentor-mentee pairs in the program.

An interim survey assessing the program's effectiveness was mailed to all participants in January, 1996. The form indicated that honest feedback was being solicited and that comments and suggestions would be incorporated and used to make improvements in the program.

Feedback from the returned evaluation forms suggested that the nature of interactions between mentors and mentees was personal and professional. Many mentees and mentors have developed friendships, while others have focused more on academic, educational, and career goals. Mentees indicated that they have been able to be open and honest with their faculty mentors and could trust that they were being sincere. Mentors mentioned that they enjoyed helping mentees with their goals and passing on advice; they also suggested that they gained a sense of self worth, and developed relationships with graduate students with whom they would not have otherwise interacted. Respondents indicated that monthly program activities were beneficial in that participants had the opportunity to have contact with other mentors and mentees in the program.

The following are quotes from one-on-one interviews conducted with a mentee, a faculty mentor, and a peer mentor. They give an added dimension to participants' written comments about the program.

> Peer mentor comments:
> When I heard about it I knew I wanted to participate because back ten years ago when I was (first) a student here (I knew) how few students of color there were on campus, ... feeling isolated and no one to really turn to. I found nobody I could really

identify with, so I wanted to make sure that other students of color who are here know that they're not alone; there are other students here who are feeling some of the same feelings that they are, who have been where they are and know that they can survive the program.

I think it was the atmosphere of being informal with faculty members is the thing that students are really turned on about, and that's the thing that they're passing on to other students to let them know that this is really a good thing. Your can meet this professor outside of class. It's very informal. You really kind of get to know them as a person and they share their research interests and concerns with you. I think there's a great need for it here.

They say they want somebody who supports them. I'm here on this campus and I just need somebody who's going to tell me what my options are and provide me with all the information and all the support to help me make decisions.

There's a lot more evolving that needs to occur, but there's been some progress, and I think this mentoring program will help strengthen the students here, in turn bringing more students to this campus, more students of color. And I think that's really what it boils down to is recruitment and retention, but while we're trying to retain you we want to provide that needed support for you. We want to keep you here. So this support that we're going to provide through the mentoring program is our way of saying we really do want you to stay and this is what we've done to make sure that you do stay.

<u>Faculty mentor comments:</u>

I certainly think here at Peabody and Vanderbilt we have a long road to go before we are able to take pride in the diversity of our campus, and I certainly want to be part of walking along that road. And I think a lot of faculty would like to do that too.

Both my mentee and I thought the match went very well. And we
think that one of the reasons is that she is a master student in ... the program that I'm in. There is that obvious face value core of common interest that sets an agenda for many things. And sometimes we get to other things. We got her to learn how to play chess and actually my kids taught her how to play, so now she's going to go back home and play her father. So it does meander to other things, but there is that common core.

I think that, in a sense, the mentoring program helps the college

and the university recognize that it has a need to do something. And, that it has a need to respond both on an institutional basis and on an individual personal basis, to its history. I think it's important. From my point of view, Peabody and Vanderbilt cannot hope to be a major research or any other kind of college and university, living in isolation of the world around it. And, I think that the mentoring program is one way of making that clear.

Mentee comments:

On the mentoring front, we make sure that we have a lunch once a
month and we both take it upon ourselves to make that responsibility because otherwise time wouldn't permit it. If you do not make a concerted effort, it wouldn't happen, so it does take the energy and effort of both parties.

I've learned that everybody has something to share, they have something to give, and all of us need support in some respect, and I think that's what the mentoring program is all about, just providing the needed support that students need on this campus.

And with my mentor he is always encouraging. He's always telling
stories about his experiences ... and just letting you know you're going to get the lumps and bumps so just (focus on) survival -- which basically I already knew but a lot of it is on a different level. A lot of times we talk about the course work. And so basically the survival techniques, the consistency, and being able to reward yourself--pat yourself on the back--because he and I talk about that too.

In order to insure that the mentorship program continues to be successful in establishing personal relationships and positive interactions between students and faculty, and in providing professional advice and assistance concerning students' career and educational goals, a proposal for the continuation of the program was submitted to the Dean of the College in March, 1996. The proposal detailed specific objectives, proposed activities, and the costs of each. Peabody College is being asked to prove its institutional

commitment by sufficiently funding this much needed program, so that it may continue to operate and accomplish its goals.

As with any first-year program, revisions will be necessary. One is to clearly lay out mentors' and mentees' responsibilities having to do with time. Consistency and regularity of interactions directly affected the formation of relationships between mentors and mentees. Informal monitoring disclosed that mentors and mentees were not meeting or making contact on a regular basis due to time constraints and difficulties in establishing a bond. Formal training sessions will place an emphasis on the availability of mentors and mentees to each other.

Attendance of mentees was sparse to nil at a few activities. At some events, faculty members were the only ones in attendance. Mentees' behaviors may indicate a lack of commitment to the program or a lack of expectation from their mentor. Many mentees indicated intent to attend events but did not make an appearance or call to cancel with their mentors. An investigation of why this has occurred is necessary. On a positive note, faculty mentors have commented that these events were productive and significant for them even when mentees did not attend. The events allowed them to become familiar with each other on a personal and professional level. A mentor cohort concept perhaps should be developed to allow faculty a forum to communicate with each other about their personal and mentoring experiences.

The matching of mentors with mentees who either did not have similar research interests or were not in the same department arose as an issue. These out-of-department matches occurred because there was an overabundance or limited number of mentors and mentees within certain departments or with certain research interests. Although there have been

successful outcomes with mentors and mentees not matched by research interests or department, there appear to have been more successful relationships among mentor-mentee pairs who share common professional or research interests. Exploring how to make mismatched relationships as effective as matched relationships seems warranted, given the differences in student and faculty participation by department and uncertainties about of the compatibility of pairs.

Mentees have made me aware of the fact that professional development efforts from faculty for graduate students of color is low to nonexistent when compared to the efforts made for white students. Smith and Davidson's (1992) findings confirmed mentees' experiences. They found that only 20% of African-American graduate students had ever presented a paper at a conference, fewer than half (47%) were involved in some type of research activity, 16% had made an effort to obtain grants, and 13% had submitted a paper for publication in a journal. The program must incorporate methods that influence faculty members to encourage the professional development of minority graduate students.

Lastly, another area to be addressed is that of other groups expressing a need for a similar program. Women and non-middle class white males (those of low socioeconomic levels or first generation college students) feel that it is necessary to include them as a part of the mentoring program. These students complain about not being personally connected to any faculty member and about having a non-enriching relationship with their advisors. Since there is the potential for backlash and resentment towards minority students involved in the mentoring program, there is a need to explain and inform the campus community of the necessity of this program for minority

students and to discuss how best to meet the needs of other disenfranchised groups.

The issues raised in this paper have importance beyond their implications for the home university. The experiences of this college can serve as a resource to inform other universities of avenues to address these commonly experienced issues. In sharing the results of the mentoring program and the campus-wide study, it is hoped that students, faculty members, and administrators will take a closer look at their own conditions and work to develop effective solutions.

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